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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 71/NO. 37 OCTOBER 8, 2007

INSIDE

Chicago 'Militant' supporters respond to racist vandalism

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'Justice for Jena 6!'

Demand thousands at Louisiana rally



Militant/Jacob Perasso (above), Laura Anderson

People came to Louisiana from across the country to demand justice for the Jena 6 on September 20. Solidarity actions took place in at least 33 states.

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON AND AMANDA ULMAN

JENA, Louisiana—Tens of thousands rallied here September 20 to demand that charges be dropped against Black high school students known as the Jena Six and that Mychal Bell be freed. Hundreds of busloads came from cities and towns from most states in the country.

Many hundreds more came by car, van, and plane. Dozens of buses were held up for more than an hour on the highway by police who said that too many people were in this central Louisiana town of 3,000. "This is what people face everywhere, and it is rare to be able to openly fight it together," said Terral Roberts, a warehouse worker from Opelousas, Louisiana, who came with five coworkers. "The injustice these students had to put up with was a lot like what we face at work."

Thousands of dollars were spontaneously raised during the rally to cover Bell's anticipated bail.

The Jena Six—Bell, 17; Robert Bailey, Jr., 17; Theo Shaw, 17; Carwin Jones,

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U.S. uses UN visit to whip up prowar rallies against Iran

BY CINDY JAQUITH

NEW YORK, September 25—The U.S. rulers took advantage of Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's visit to the United Nations this week to try to isolate Iran politically and win support for the "war on terror." Demonstrations and counterdemonstrations reflected the sharp polarization here over Washington's policy toward Iran.

Columbia University president Lee Bollinger invited Ahmadinejad to join a debate on campus, provoking a furor from major Jewish organizations, several student groups, virtually all the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates, and many local newspapers, who condemned the idea of giving the Iranian head of state a platform.

Bollinger opened the debate yesterday with a 10-minute verbal attack on Ahmadinejad.

"Mr. President, you exhibit all the signs of a petty and cruel dictator," Bollinger said. "[W]hy have women, members of the Ba'hai faith, homosexuals, and so many of our colleagues become targets of persecution in your country?" He denounced Ahmadinejad for denying that the Holocaust happened and said it was "well-documented" that

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U.S. mercenary outfit back on streets in Iraq

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, September 25—As the White House prepared to request another $195 million in funding for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the private U.S. security firm Blackwater was back on the streets in Iraq after having been suspended.

The Iraqi cabinet suspended the outfit's license September 18. Blackwater mercenaries had opened fire in Baghdad September 16, killing at least eight civilians. The Iraqi government called the shooting unjustifiable and said it expects to refer criminal charges to its courts.

Iraq's Interior Ministry announced today that it had finished drafting a law ending legal immunity for private security outfits. The immunity was granted in 2004 by the government installed by Washington after the defeat of Saddam Hussein.

The Iraqi government also said it is investigating five other incidents involving Blackwater, in which Iraqis were killed or wounded, and a sixth incident involving vandalism.

In addition to the 160,000 occupying U.S. troops in Iraq, 21 private security companies under contract with Washington have 10,800 armed employees deployed there, according to figures obtained from the *Los Angeles*

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International conference discusses overseas Chinese

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

BEIJING—Nearly 175 people took part in the Sixth International Conference on Overseas Chinese, held at Peking University here September 21–23. Most were researchers who focus on the history and development of Chinese communities that today exist in a big majority of the countries of the world and in many cases are being rapidly swelled by immigration—from the Americas to Africa to Southeast Asia.

The conference, organized by the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas (ISSCO), drew participants from 20 countries. Two-thirds came from Asia, with the largest representation from mainland China, Singapore, and Japan, along with others from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and south Korea. Several noted during the conference that 20 million ethnic Chinese live in Southeast Asia, about 75 percent of all who live outside China.

Other delegates came from the United States, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, Trinidad, Peru, Cuba, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere.

ISSCO was founded at a 1992 conference in San Francisco. Ling-chi Wang, one of ISSCO's founders and its vice president for a decade, noted in a keynote speech that the idea of an international association dedicated to the study of the Chinese diaspora had been discussed since the early 1980s. In the framework of Cold War politics and divisions, including those within the socialist camp, he said, it was an unrealizable objective. Only in the early 1990s did such an association become possible. Subsequent ISSCO conferences were held in Hong Kong in 1994, Manila in 1998, Taipei in 2001, and Copenhagen in 2004.

This was the first ISSCO conference in China. It was held in a new, well-equipped building at Peking University—the first modern university in China. Founded in 1898, the university today has a full-time enrollment of 30,000. A crew of students, many of whom spoke English and were eager to meet participants from around the world, were among the volunteer staff organizing the conference.

Representatives of Peking University, the Chinese government's Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese, and outgoing ISSCO president Teresita Ang See of the Philippines

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London bails out bank hit by defaults in home loans

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON, September 21—Financial troubles at Northern Rock bank last week triggered the most serious run on a British bank in living memory. Thousands of people lined up outside the bank's offices to withdraw money.

Northern Rock is the United Kingdom's fifth-largest mortgage lender. It has declared assets of £113 billion (£1=US$2), mostly in its 800,000 household mortgages. The deposits of 1.3 million customers there only account for between £22 and £24 billion. The bulk of its lending is funded by short-term loans from other banks.

In an effort to stem withdrawals, UK finance minister Alistair Darling, flanked by U.S. treasury secretary Hank

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Join 'Militant' subscription campaign!

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

The *Militant* is launching a seven-week campaign to increase our circulation starting September 29.

There will be many opportunities to get the paper out over the next seven weeks: antiwar marches, activities in support of five framed-up Cuban revolutionaries currently held in U.S. jails, and continuing actions against immigration raids and deportations.

Protests demanding justice for the Jena Six, and regular sales of the paper in the

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'Militant' launches $100,000 fund drive

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Also Inside:

‘Justice for Jena 6!’

Continued from front page

18; Bryant Purvis, 17; and Jesse Beard, 15—were arrested and charged with attempted second-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder after a white student filed charges following a fight at Jena High School last December.

The fight happened after months of racist harassment and attacks against Black students at the school, who had launched a campaign to protest racist practices there. After Black students staged a sit-in under what was known as the “white tree,” racists hung three nooses from the tree.

The white students who hung the nooses received only brief school suspensions.

Bell was tried and convicted by an all white jury. He remains in jail even though a state appeals court threw out his conviction of aggravated assault, ruling that he should not have been tried in adult court. The day after the demonstration he was again denied bail.

“After I heard about these students I couldn’t imagine not being here and being part of history,” said Infinitae Speights, 21, a certified nurse assistant who came on a bus from New York.

The march through Jena to the LaSalle Parish court house was spirited and disciplined. Many wore T-shirts reading, “Free the Jena 6! Enough is Enough!” Others carried hand lettered signs.

An enormous police presence blocked buses and cars and, in some instances, prevented participants from reaching their buses for hours afterwards. While protesters faced few overt racist incidents, Confederate flags were displayed on the fence of a mansion outside of town and a lone pickup truck with nooses circled protesters leaving nearby Alexandria after a rally.

History is very much part of the present here. Following the Civil War, this area was both a center for freed slaves who fought in the Union army and for Confederate thugs organized by the Democratic Party. In 1873, hundreds of former Confederate soldiers from LaSalle Parish joined an attack on free Blacks in Colfax. After defeating the less well armed African Americans, they shot all the surrendering Blacks.

Ray Fairman, 62, a Jena resident with a long memory, welcomed the visiting demonstrators offering rides to people who lost their buses, jumper cables for stalled cars, and water for the thirsty.

“If they are going to try to sweep this kind of thing under the rug, they have think to about it now,” he said. “Because they don’t know who the janitor is going to be. We’re going to come along with our brooms and see that it’s not right.”

“As working people we have to stand together because no one is going to do it for us,” said Sandie Lollie, 50, president of the Monroe Federation of Teachers and School Employees. Lollie came with 1,000 others from Monroe, Louisiana.

Upon seeing a group of young immigrant workers at the demonstration who

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SWP candidate: ‘Legalization now!’



Militant photos by Betsey Stone

SAN JOSE, California—Gerardo Sánchez (right), Socialist Workers Party candidate for San Francisco district attorney, speaks at a September 12 rally here against immigration raids and deportations. “The fight for legalization of immigrants should be supported by all working people,” Sánchez said. “We have to fight attempts by the bosses to divide us.” Pointing to the recent deaths of coal miners in Utah, the socialist candidate said that miners and other workers need unions to fight for safety and against the attacks of the employers.

The San Jose action, which included a march of 200, was part of a nationwide effort that day, including a vigil of 100 in San Francisco and a rally in Washington, D.C.

—BETSEY STONE

UAW, GM reach agreement after 2-day strike

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

September 26—The union representing workers at General Motors (GM) reached a tentative agreement today with the auto giant after a two-day strike.

Some 73,000 members of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) walked out September 24, shutting down production at 82 GM plants in 30 states.

Under the new agreement, GM will no longer bear responsibility for health benefits for union members, retirees, and their families. They will now be covered through a union-administered trust fund. “The trust is expected to remove more than $50 billion in long-term obligations from GM’s books,” the *Detroit Free Press* reported.

According to the *Free Press*, the pact includes no wage increases and establishes two wage tiers. New hires and workers in “non-core” jobs will be paid at a lower rate.

Bloomberg news service said the new pact may “transform the competitive landscape for the U.S. auto industry,” making its costs closer to those of its Japanese rivals. It will be the model for upcoming contracts with Ford and Chrysler.

UAW president Ron Gettelfinger said the new pact includes promises of job security for GM workers in the United States. The majority of GM’s profits now come from its non-U.S. operations.

“Since 2003, our members have made extraordinary efforts every time the company came to us with a problem: the corporate restructuring, the attrition plan, the Delphi bankruptcy, the 2005 health care agreement,” said Gettelfinger in a statement announcing the strike.

The union negotiated “landmark” health-care concessions with GM and Ford in 2005; this was followed by an attrition plan with the Big Three that allowed cutting more than 75,000 jobs. In June the union ratified a four-year contract with Delphi Corp., GM’s largest parts supplier, that included cuts in wages, plant closings, and elimination of the union’s jobs bank.

GM’s workforce is less than a quarter of its 1990 level.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Minnesota meat packers demand access to union reps

BY REBECCA WILLIAMSON

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota—“When it comes to your rights, you can’t be afraid,” said Salvador Sosa, who works on the cut side at the Dakota Premium Foods slaughterhouse here. “You have to abandon your fears to fight for your rights.”

Sosa is one of the union activists in the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789 fighting a company-led decertification campaign at Dakota. Workers say they are pressing for safer working conditions, better wages, and dignity on the job. They won union representation in 2000, following a struggle that included a seven-hour sit-down strike. It took two more years to force the company to agree to a contract, which expired in June of this year.

A delegation of workers went to the office on their break September 19 to demand that management allow union representatives and shop stewards access to their members in the plant. They also demanded the company negotiate a new contract and stop harassing union supporters.

“Dakota Premium is the ONLY Employer in our Union of 7,500 members where we can’t talk to members in their workplace,” said a leaflet distributed by Local 789 on September 24.

The local organized a rally outside the plant September 19 to press the same demands.

Jesús García, a worker on the deboning side, explained how management acted to prevent workers from joining or even viewing the rally. “They were pushing all the people that way,” he said, pointing to a road away from where the action took place. “They didn’t let us leave through the main exit, it was closed.” The company also put a crew of management outside and on the roof. The human resources manager was taking photos. A number of union activists attended the rally. The TV station KARE 11 showed the action on the evening news that night. Dakota workers were interviewed by *Workday Minnesota*, a state labor publication.

A week earlier, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) approved a company-backed petition for a decertification election. The election will be held at least 60 days from the date of the announcement.

According to Local 789 representative Rafael Espinosa, several charges must be resolved before the election can take place. “Both sides need to negotiate and agree for the date of the decertification vote after the 60 days,” he said.

Rebecca Williamson is a trimmer at Dakota Premium Foods and a member of UFCW Local 789.

Thousands will protest Iraq war in actions this fall

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK, September 24—Thousands are expected to march on Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles September 29 to protest Washington’s war in Iraq. National mobilizations in 11 cities on October 27 will again bring thousands into the streets.

The actions come after 15,000 marched on Washington September 15 to demand, “End the war now!”

The September 29 marches are sponsored by the Troops Out Now Coalition and many other organizations. Participants will travel to Washington from 32 states on more than 100 buses—some from as far as Oregon and California, according to organizers. Others are carpooling in vans and car caravans.

“We expect a large mobilization on Saturday,” said LeiLani Dowell, an organizer with the Troops Out Now Coalition. “We got a tremendous response here in D.C. at Howard University.”

Opponents of the war in Iraq publicized the September and October actions at marches in support of the Jena Six in Jena, Louisiana, and elsewhere on September 20.

“Many are being drawn to the peace actions looking for a way to fight Washington’s so-called global war on terror,” said Ben O’Shaughnessy, organizer of the Young Socialists National Steering Committee. “They are looking for an alternative to forces that look to the Democratic majority in Congress who are less and less even posturing as opponents of the war.”

The United for Peace and Justice Coalition has initiated regional actions October 27 under the slogan “End the War Now!” in 11 cities (see ad below). The action in New Orleans will dovetail with ongoing fights for jobs, housing, and social services in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

For more information, contact the YS at youngsocialists@mac.com, (212) 629-6649; local *Militant* distributors listed on page 8; the Troops Out Now Coalition at www.troopsoutnow.org; or www.Oct27.org.

Washington whips up support for military threats against Iran

Continued from front page

Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism.

Bollinger’s arrogant tone took some students by surprise. Some cheered when Ahmadinejad said that Bollinger ought to let those in the audience make up their own minds about what he was going to say.

The Iranian president avoided some of the blatant anti-Semitism he has expressed in the past, and instead argued there ought to be room for “different perspectives” on what happened to Jews in Nazi Germany. He said the future of Israel should be determined by letting “the people of Palestine freely choose what they want.” On 9/11, he called for an examination of “why it happened . . . who was really involved?”

Many in the audience laughed when Ahmadinejad said, “In Iran, we don’t have homosexuals, like in your country.” The Iranian president also said women there “enjoy the highest levels of freedom.”

He defended Iran’s right to develop nuclear energy, stating, “If you have created the fifth generation of atomic bombs and are testing them already, who are you to question other people who just want nuclear power?”

Columbia students were divided over the visit. The campus was covered with posters denouncing Ahmadinejad for his reactionary views on women, gays, and Jews. A large number of students wore black T-shirts that said, “Stop Ahmadinejad’s Evil—Columbia Students United Against Ahmadinejad.” The Young Republicans and several Jewish student groups organized a rally against him.

But among the several thousand students who either attended the debate or watched it telecast live in the campus’s plaza, there were also those concerned about the growing threat of a U.S. attack on Iran.



Militant/Sarah Katz

Prowar rally at Columbia University in New York during visit by Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. “Hitler Lives” signs depicted Ahmadinejad as a swastika.

A statement was read out by a group of Iranian students who disagreed with many of Ahmadinejad’s views. “The main issue is that the world must not be tricked into believing a war and sanctions are the solution,” the statement said. An Iranian-born graduate student, Fatemeh Farshneshani, held an Iranian flag and told reporters, “Any change in Iran should come from within.”

An open letter urging students to boycott the anti-Ahmadinejad rally and instead “express vocally their opposition to military intervention” was issued by the Columbia Coalition Against the War.

Outside the campus, more than 1,000 people—most of them young—demonstrated against Ahmadinejad. Many carried signs comparing Ahmadinejad to Hitler or waved Israeli or American flags. A few sported T-shirts of the Israel Defense Force, Tel Aviv’s army. Some people passed out flyers from the Jewish Defense Organization that threatened, “We will break Bollinger in half” for inviting Ahmadinejad.

One group of Iranians waved posters with a picture of the son of the U.S.-backed shah who was overthrown in the 1979 revolution. Their signs said “Long live Iran; Reza Pahlevi for democracy in Iran.”

About a dozen people demonstrated against U.S. threats to Iran and in support of Ahmadinejad’s right to speak. Several carried a banner from the Iranian-American Friendship Society that said, “Stop War on Iran—No Sanctions.”

“I’m here in support of Ahmadinejad’s right to speak at Columbia, at the UN, anywhere,” said antiwar demonstrator Ann Shirazi. “They’re demonizing a legitimate president of a country, trying to foment an attack on Iran like they did on Iraq. Iran is permitted by law to have nuclear power.”

Ardashir Ommani, who witnessed the 1953 coup in Iran organized by the CIA and British intelligence, said the propaganda surrounding Ahmadinejad’s visit “only serves those who are killing Palestinians, those who are planning another war, the rich.”

“I’m not so much for Ahmadinejad but against Bush and Israel,” said Eugene Pastore Desousa, a medical student from Brazil. “Bush called Ahmadinejad a terrorist. Who is Bush to decide who’s a terrorist?”

The antiwar demonstrators stood their ground despite threats from about 50 prowar marchers who shouted insults at them and chanted “USA! USA!”

Sarah Katz contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Venezuela and the World. Special Program to Benefit the *Militant* Newspaper. Speakers: Norton Sandler, SWP National Committee; and others. Sat. Oct. 6. Program, 7:30 p.m.; dinner, 6:30 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. *3926 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.*

—CALENDAR—

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Fighting U.S. Aggression from Angola to Miami: Cuba’s Internationalism from Che Guevara to the Cuban Five. Tues., Oct. 2, 7 p.m. *Georgia State University, General Classroom Building Rm. 107 South. E-mail: sobukwekuumba@yahoo.com*

YS joins other fighters for justice for Jena 6

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel.: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

BY BEN O'SHAUGHNESSY

JENA, Louisiana—Young Socialists across the country joined with tens of thousands of other youth September 20 to demand "Justice for the Jena Six! Drop the charges!" YS members got on buses with other young people to come to the march and rally here, and others participated in local solidarity actions in other cities.

YS members participated in a youth dialogue at the Christian Saints Baptist Church here the night before the march. Young people were asked questions ranging from "Why did you come to Jena?" to "How can you get other young people involved in these fights?"

"My first protest was after the Rodney King verdict when I was in sixth grade," said Loretta VanPelt, a YS member from Atlanta, during the discussion. "I knew after that I wanted to fight for justice. I later got involved in protests against the war in Iraq."

That night, YS members and other young people from Atlanta met up with youth from Jena who explained the social and economic conditions faced by Blacks in the area.

"I work at McDonald's for $5.85 an hour. It's either that or work the streets," said a 24-year-old Black worker. "I'm just trying my best to make a living."

He explained that police harassment and frame-ups are a common occurrence.

"This stuff happens all the time around here, it's finally getting attention," he said.

René Chum, 22, was one of three young workers with Cajola United in Solidarity with Guatemala, a Guatemalan solidarity organization in Atlanta, who came to the action here with the YS and the Socialist Workers Party. The response to the solidarity from them was overwhelming as dozens of Blacks identified with the struggle for legalization of undocumented immigrants.

"One woman came up and told us we need another march for immigrant rights," said Chum, 22.

"Many young people at the march were happy to see us. They took pictures with us to show solidarity," he said.

Young socialists elsewhere joined local actions calling for the release of the Jena Six.

At the State University of New York at Albany, about 200 students joined a speak-out organized by the Sigma Iota Sigma multicultural fraternity. Other groups in attendance included the Albany State University Black Alliance, the NAACP, Fuerza Latina, and the Young Socialists.

"We need to keep up the pressure until the charges are dropped against the Six," said Ben Joyce, a member of the YS in Albany. He pointed to some of the recent mobilizations for legalization and for end to the raids and deportations as an example for working people and youth looking to fight against assaults from the ruling class. At Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, New York, 40 students and others rallied. Protesters chanted "One standard not two" and "Injustice in Jena is a threat to justice in Brooklyn," and held signs including "First Sean Bell, now Mychal Bell." Sean Bell is a Black youth who was killed by New York cops in a hail of 50 bullets last November. Mychal Bell is one of the Jena Six.

Ben Joyce and Emily Paul contributed to this article from Albany and Brooklyn, New York.



AP/Frank Franklin

Freddy Huinil, left, and René Chum, both from Georgia, carry joint signs of Cajola United in Solidarity with Guatemala and the Young Socialists at September 20 action in Jena, Louisiana. Several Black marchers warmly welcomed the solidarity from these immigrant workers.

Anti-immigrant law pushed back in Riverside, N.J.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEWARK, New Jersey—Authorities in the south New Jersey town of Riverside voted September 17 to rescind an anti-immigrant law passed by the Township Council in July 2006.

"This is the latest in a string of defeats for these ordinances," Omar Jadwat, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union's (ACLU) Immigrants' Rights Project, told Reuters. "Those towns should look at the writing on the wall and see that this isn't an option that's open to them."

The "Illegal Immigration Relief Act" would have imposed fines starting at $1,000 for hiring an undocumented worker or for renting to anyone who cannot prove they are in the United States legally.

Passage of the ordinance was met with a protest of 300 in August 2006 and an aggressive countermobilization of 400 rightists carrying U.S. and Confederate flags and chanting "Scram!"

The ACLU, together with the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (PRLDEF) and People for the American Way Foundation, filed a lawsuit saying the measure violates civil rights under the New Jersey constitution.

According to PRLDEF, 129 municipalities nationwide have passed or are considering such measures. None has implemented them.

In July, a federal judge declared a similar anti-immigrant law in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, unconstitutional. Similar rulings have occurred in Escondido, California; Valley Park, Missouri; and Farmers Branch, Texas. Riverside, which has a population of about 8,000, was the first city to repeal its law prior to a court ruling.

"The fact that they rescinded these policies show that they are not feasible," said Dolores Ortiz, a member of Pan American Solidarity Organization at Temple University, who lives in Pennsauken, New Jersey, outside Riverside. "Now it's very polarized. Before the ordinance was passed, all residents were accepted. It was never a question of whether someone was legal or not."

Ellen Berman in Philadelphia contributed to this article.

Sub campaign

Continued from front page

Black community, are another great way to meet people who should subscribe to the socialist press. Sixty-eight people picked up subscriptions to the paper at a September 20 march in Jena, Louisiana. Participants also bought more than $500 worth of Pathfinder books. At a rest stop between Jena and New York, a truck driver got a six-month subscription and took several more copies of the paper to distribute.

Militant supporters will also go to the western coal fields in the coming weeks to win new readers and renewals from those who subscribed during the recent Utah mine disaster.

Ned Dmytryshyn writes from Vancouver, British Columbia, "Striking loggers gave a warm reception to the *Militant* team" during a September 14–16 visit to Northern Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast. *Militant* distributors sold four subscriptions and two copies of the pamphlet *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* to striking forestry workers there.

We will publish the international goal in next weeks issue.

The drive ends November 18. To get involved, contact *Militant* distributors near you listed on page 8; or order a bundle to share with co-workers, neighbors, and friends, by contacting the *Militant* at the address listed on page 2.

'Militant' Subscription Drive Sept. 29 – Nov. 18

Country	Quota
AUSTRALIA	40
CANADA	115
NEW ZEALAND	55
UNITED KINGDOM	
Edinburgh	50
London	70
UK Total	120
UNITED STATES	
Boston	60
Chicago	80
Des Moines	125
Houston	80
Los Angeles	95
Miami	130
New York	290
Newark	115
Pittsburgh	50
San Francisco	110
Seattle	95
Washington, DC	110
U.S. Total	**1,340**
Int'l totals	**1,670**

'Militant' launches fund drive

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The *Militant* is launching an eight-week drive to raise $100,000 to support the socialist newsweekly. The campaign begins September 29 and ends November 25.

Contributions from its readers make it possible for the *Militant* to cover struggles by working people—from reporting on the fight by immigrants for legalization, to covering the massive September 20 march and rally in Jena, Louisiana, in support of the Jena Six.

The funds raised will help to send reporting teams to the Venezuela International Book Fair this coming November and to the Havana Book Fair early next year. Funds are needed now to help the paper cover printing, shipping, rent, and other expenses.

With seven areas yet to report their quotas, the total pledged currently falls $30,000 short of the goal.

Supporters in some areas are already making plans to hold *Militant* fund events early in the drive. Reports on these and other events should be sent to the *Militant* each week.

To make a contribution, contact local distributors listed on page 8 or send checks payable to the *Militant* to the address listed on page 2.

$100,000 'Militant' Fund Drive Sept 29 –Nov. 25

Country	Quota
AUSTRALIA	1,400
CANADA	4,100
FRANCE	
NEW ZEALAND	3,000
UNITED KINGDOM	
Edinburgh	650
London	1,650
UK total	2,300
UNITED STATES	
Boston	2,800
Chicago	6,000
Des Moines	2,000
Houston	3,000
Miami	3,000
Newark	3,500
New York	15,000
Pittsburgh	3,500
San Francisco	11,000
Seattle	7,000
Washington, D.C.	2,800
U.S. total	59,600
Int'l totals	**70,400**
Goal/Should be	**100,000**

Minnesota university workers assess strike

BY SANDI SHERMAN

MINNEAPOLIS, September 21— A 16-day strike at the University of Minnesota ended today. Officials of the joint bargaining committee representing four locals of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) reported to a meeting of 600 strikers that the university administration refused to back down from a previously rejected offer.

"Next time it's going to be a bigger fight," said striker Emily Kreitzer. "All I can say right now is people are really angry, and they're really insulted." After a discussion at tonight's meeting, most workers agreed that striking was the right thing to do.

The strike began September 5, when 1,245 workers walked out to protest inadequate cost-of-living raises. It was the second strike at the university in 60 years, and the first that united all four AFSCME locals at one negotiating table. The strike had an impact on key university services, and won support from faculty, students, and other unions. Unions and other supporters donated more than $75,000 to a strike hardship fund, and many joined the picket lines.

The administration's offer includes a two-year contract with $300 lump-sum payments each year and $300 in additional lump sums for those at the top of their pay scales. It includes raises of 2.25 percent for clerical and technical workers and 2.5 percent for healthcare workers. The offer will be sent out for vote in early October without recommendation by the bargaining committee.

"It's been really tough, but it's also been fun and empowering," said striker Nicole Masika. She said she plans to tell her two teenage children that "I tried to do the right thing. We may do without some material things for a few months, but I did what was right."

"When you go on strike, there are some things that you can measure and some that you can't," said Local 3800 president Phyllis Walker at a news conference today. "The strength that builds in the union from doing that, the way people feel for themselves because they stood up and fought."

The administration's refusal to change its final offer led many to the conclusion that this fight was about more than money. "They're trying to bust up our union, but they're not going to bust our union up," said James Calicutt. "They can forget about that. The union's going to stand."

Sandi Sherman is a member of AFSCME Local 3800 at the University of Minnesota.



Brad Sigal

University strikers rally September 5 in Minneapolis

ON THE PICKET LINE

Gold Miners strike in Papua New Guinea

SYDNEY, Australia—Miners at the Lihir gold mine located on Lihir Island northeast of Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea, walked off the job on August 31. The mine owned by Lihir Gold Ltd. is one of the largest gold mining operations in the world.

Among the issues raised by miners were layoffs, safety problems, and unequal pay and conditions among workers, with native Papua New Guineas at the bottom.

Armed police were flown in to "protect the mine" on the third day of the strike. The miners returned to work on September 7 after the company's chief executive agreed to discuss their demands. During the strike workers formed the Lihir Gold Allied Workers Union.

—Alasdair McDonald

Construction workers in Canada protest antiunion laws

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Chanting "Rights, right now!" and "Change the law!" more than 400 Alberta construction workers and representatives from dozens of other unions marched on the Alberta provincial legislature September 13 to protest laws aimed at preventing construction strikes.

In Alberta, if three-quarters of construction unions reach contract settlements, the other unions lose their right to strike. Because 19 of 25 construction unions have settled, strikes by any of the remaining unions have been declared illegal. These include 4,000 carpenters—who had voted 97 percent to strike—pipefitters, laborers, and plumbers.

Workers at protest actions explained that Alberta's labor laws pit union against union. Enough unions, they explained, get offered more money than others to ensure the 75 percent threshold is always met. "It's all about divide and conquer," said pipefitter Michael Dunn.

—Steve Penner

London bails out bank hit by loan defaults

Continued from front page

Paulson, announced September 17 that the British government was guaranteeing all deposits there.

Darling said that a similar guarantee would be extended to any bank requiring it during the "current instability" in the financial system.

Several days earlier the Bank of England came to Northern Rock's aid as "lender of last resort." About £1 billion was withdrawn from personal savings accounts the day the bailout was announced.

"During the first half of 2007, it [Northern Rock] received just £1.7 billion of new money from savers. Yet it lent a whopping £10.7 billion to new borrowers," wrote Dan Roberts in the September 17 *Daily Telegraph*. "The shortfall was made up through borrowing from the City [London's main financial district] totaling some £10.3 billion."

This made Northern Rock vulnerable when short-term lending between banks dried up or became extremely expensive in the wake of the "subprime mortgage crisis" in the United States. The bank couldn't raise funds. Northern Rock's share price was cut by 75 percent.

Government policy over the last quarter century has boosted "home ownership" in the UK. Today 70 percent of households "own" their home, with mortgages totaling about £350 billion. So-called subprime loans account for around £25 billion of this total.

In recent weeks, people with variable interest mortgages have seen their rate increase by more than 3 percent. Mortgage rates hit a nine-year high last week.

Over the next three months average monthly payments for hundreds of thousands will increase by about £200 per month as their fixed low rate loans are transferred into variable rate mortgages.

Personal debt in the UK today stands at more than £1.3 trillion.

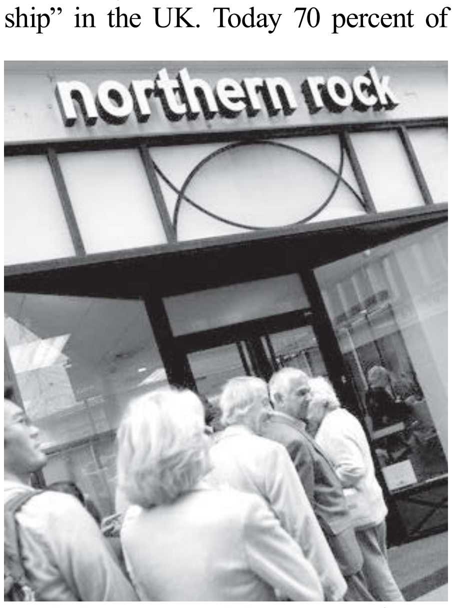
Financial commentators and ruling class figures here are debating the consequences of the tighter credit for the broader economy—what some are calling contagion.

Already this "credit crunch" has taken its toll in Germany, forcing two multibillion euro state-sponsored bank bailouts. The share prices of every German bank have taken a pummeling.

In the UK, the share prices of Alliance & Leicester and Bradford & Bingley, two Northern Rock rivals that also tap the capital markets for funding, have been hit. Barclays, one of the top five UK banks, has seen its shares tumble.

Major U.S. investment banks Lehman Brothers and JP Morgan Chase have recorded losses of nearly one billion dollars in the third quarter of this year.

Concern that the U.S. economy might be slowing prompted the U.S. Federal Reserve to cut interest rates by half a point. One investment banker told the *Sunday Times* "the banks' numbers are as important as whether the Fed cuts rates . . . People are spooked."



People line up to withdraw money from a London Northern Rock bank September 18.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

October 8, 1982

Claiming that they will act "to restore peace to Beirut," President Reagan has ordered 1,200 marines into Lebanon. Eight hundred landed in Beirut September 29, with more expected to follow.

The U.S. Marines, along with French and Italian troops, are acting as an occupation force in behalf of the right-wing Christian forces that were handed governmental power by the Israeli army in late August.

Both Washington and Tel Aviv favor the establishment of a stable rightist government in Lebanon. That was one of the goals of the Israeli invasion. The massacre in West Beirut made it politically impossible for the Israeli army to carry out that task in the Lebanese capital. Therefore, the ball has been passed to the U.S.-French-Italian "peacekeeping" force.

October 7, 1957

The events in Little Rock have a profound significance for the American labor movement. It is no mere coincidence that a professional strikebreaker was an organizer and leader of the white mob violence.

This Jim-Crow, antiunion South has become a haven for runaway industries and plants seeking cheap labor. It has supplied a powerful bloc of rabid labor-haters to Congress.

The union leaders know this. It makes their failure to take a militant lead in the school integration fight, particularly in Little Rock, all the more shameful. They don't want to embarrass the Democratic Party.

That is the stand of a morally-bankrupt opportunist. The labor movement is paying a heavy price, and will pay more, for this alliance with beneficiaries and protectors of Jim Crow.

October 8, 1932

The case of the nine Negro boys who were framed in Scottsboro, Alabama, by the white southern bourbons on a trumped-up charge of rape is now approaching a tentative conclusion. On October 10, the Supreme Court of the United States is to review the case. That the case has gone so far is entirely to the credit of the International Labor Defense and the Communist party which have fought in this case with an agitational ardor that is truly admirable.

The demonstrations called for by the party for October 8, throughout the United States, must be supported by every class-conscious worker. We must not leave to the so-called impartiality of the Supreme Court the fate of the Scottsboro boys. We must demonstrate in mass for our demand the Negro boys of Scottsboro do not burn!

‘Che was won to the vanguard fighting arms in hand’

Introduction by Mary-Alice Waters to ‘Che Guevara Talks to Young People’

Below is an excerpt from Che Guevara Talks to Young People. *It is one of several titles from Pathfinder Press on Cuba’s living revolutionary example highlighting the communist course of Ernesto Che Guevara. In last week’s issue we ran excerpts of a 1960 speech in the book by Guevara that inaugurated a series of discussions by Cuba’s Ministry of Public Health. Below we print excerpts from the introduction to the book by Mary-Alice Waters. We reprint it on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Guevara’s death in combat in Bolivia on Oct. 9, 1967. Copyright © 2000 Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Che Guevara Talks to Young People is not a “Che for Beginners.” The legendary Argentine-born revolutionary, who helped lead the first socialist revolution in the Americas and initiate the renewal of Marxism in the 1960s, speaks as an equal with the youth of Cuba and the world. He never talks down. He sets an example as he urges young people to rise to the level of revolutionary activity and scientific thought necessary to confront and resolve the historic contradictions of capitalism that threaten humanity.

He challenges them to work—physically and intellectually. To learn to be disciplined. To become revolutionists of action. . . .

From a young student rebel attracted to revolutionary ideas, Guevara—like other great communist leaders before him, starting with Marx and Engels themselves—was won to the popular revolutionary vanguard fighting arms in hand for liberation from oppression, exploitation, and all the accompanying indignities. Along that trajectory of revolutionary action by the toilers combined with systematic, disciplined, hard work and study, Guevara emerged as one of the foremost proletarian leaders of our epoch. . . .



Institute of Cuban History

Che Guevara doing voluntary work at the beginning of 1960. Guevara “sets an example as he urges young people to rise to the level of revolutionary activity and scientific thought necessary to confront and resolve the historic contradictions of capitalism,” writes Mary-Alice Waters in the introduction to *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*.

By consistently taking the political and theoretical conquests of Marx, Engels, and Lenin as his guide, by making the early years following the October 1917 revolution a point of reference, Guevara worked to lay a foundation that would help lead the Cuban Revolution to a different fate than that suffered by the regimes and parties of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. It is no accident that his name and example are associated so closely with what is called in Cuba the Rectification process, the policies initiated by Cuban president Fidel Castro in 1986 (well before “the meringue fell” across Eastern Europe, as Cubans say) that strengthened Cuban working people and set the revolution on a course enabling it to survive the severe test of political isolation and economic hardship in the 1990s known as the Special Period.

Che Guevara’s profound Marxism informs every page of this book. “On the most basic level,” he told the international meeting of architecture students in Havana in September 1963, “our country has what is scientifically called the dictatorship of the proletariat, and we do not allow anyone to touch or threaten the state power of the proletarian dictatorship. But within the dictatorship of the proletariat there can be a vast field for discussion and expression of ideas.”

Among the many delightfully rich moments readers will encounter in the speeches that follow is Guevara’s lesson in the practical connection between the class foundations of ethics and aesthetics. Speaking to architecture students in 1963, and explaining that technology is a weapon that serves different classes for different ends, Che pointed to a mural on the wall of the auditorium. He remarked that there is a weapon depicted in the mural, “a U.S.-made M-1, a Garand rifle. When it was in the hands of Batista’s soldiers and they were firing on us, that weapon was hideous. But that same weapon became extraordinarily beautiful when we captured it, when we wrested it from a soldier’s hands, when it became part of the arsenal of the people’s army. In our hands it became an object of dignity.”

A similar thread of scientific clarity and an uncompromising dialectical materialism on questions such as education and human nature, links Guevara to fundamental writings of Marx, such as his 1845 “Theses on Feuerbach.” Criticizing the mechanical materialism of some of the progressive bourgeois forces of the time, Marx wrote: “The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that the educator must himself be educated.” Human nature is not an immutable characteristic of human beings considered as abstract individuals, he said, but concretely “the ensemble of the social relations.”

In his farewell remarks to the international volunteer work brigades, Guevara asks: “Have the people of this country made a revolution because that’s just the way they are?”

“Absolutely not,” he answers.

“The people are the way they are because they are in the midst of a revolution.” Through their actions, they are forging different social relations and a different understanding of themselves and the world—thus becoming different individuals, creating a different “human nature,” on the road to becoming socialist men and women.

Youth must march in the vanguard, Guevara insists throughout, taking on the hardest tasks in every endeavor. That is the only road toward becoming leaders of other women and men—just as the officers in the Rebel Army won their stripes on the battlefield. Youth must learn to lead not only their peers, but revolutionists older than themselves as well. You must be a model “for older men and women who have lost some of that youthful enthusiasm,” Guevara told the UJC [Union of Young Communist] leaders in October 1962.

Above all, you must be political. “To be apolitical is to turn one’s back on every movement in the world,” he says to the international meeting of architecture students.

And to the youth working at the Ministry of Industry—which he himself headed at the time—Guevara explained the need to “politicize the ministry.” That is the only way you can fight to change it from being a “cold, a very bureaucratic place, a nest of nit-picking bureaucrats and bores, from the minister on down, who are constantly tackling concrete tasks in order to search for new relationships and new attitudes,” he told them. Only by bringing the broadest world and class perspectives—and the most uncompromising acceptance of the laws of motion of modern history—into the most routine of tasks can you counter the depoliticizing, bureaucratizing pressures of day-to-day existence that can undermine the morale, confidence, and combativity of even the best revolutionary fighters. . . .

If “politicize the ministry” is one part of the answer he gives, voluntary work is another.

“Why do we emphasize voluntary work so much?” asks Guevara. “Economically it means practically nothing.” But it is “important today because these individuals are giving a part of their lives to society without expecting anything in return. . . . This is the first step in transforming work into what it will eventually become, as a result of the advance of technology, the advance of production, and the advance of the relations of production: an activity of a higher level, a social necessity” that we will look forward to in the way we now anticipate a Sunday off. . . .



Federation of Cuban Women

Members of construction minibrigade doing voluntary labor in 1988.

❖

“To the powerful masters we represent all that is absurd, negative, irreverent, and disruptive in this America that they so despise and scorn,” Guevara told the students at the University of Havana in March 1960. But to the great mass of the people of the Americas, “we represent everything noble, sincere and combative.”

Forty years later those words continue to ring true. Guevara’s talks with young people continue to point the way forward—the way toward becoming revolutionary combatants of the highest caliber, and, in his own words, “politicians of a new type.”

Chicago 'Militant' supporters respond to racist vandalism

BY DENNIS RICHTER

CHICAGO—Organizers of the Militant Labor Forum here are responding to racist vandalism against their hall which they say is a direct result of their support for the Jena Six.

The storefront window of the hall was defaced with racist and anti-gay graffiti September 23. Slurs were scrawled on the window in black marker above copies of the *Militant* newspaper displayed in the window. The headline of the *Militant* read: "Justice for the Jena 6! Drop the charges now!"

The windows also display a T-shirt demanding justice for the Jena Six, and books by Malcolm X, Che Guevara, and others published by Pathfinder Press. The hall serves as the meeting place for the Militant Labor Forum, a weekly workers' political meeting organized by supporters of the *Militant*.

Forum participants went on busses from Chicago to a September 20 march and rally in Jena, Louisiana. They've also been involved in struggles against police brutality and racist attacks in this city. An August 24 forum protesting cop killings featured relatives of youth gunned down by Chicago police.

"Forum participants will not be intimidated by this attempt to silence us," said forum director Laura Anderson in a September 23 press release. "In response to this threat, we plan to step up sales of the *Militant* newspaper and build this week's Militant Labor Forum."

The September 28 forum will be a panel of speakers who attended the march in Jena. The forum topic is "Justice for the Jena 6! Drop the charges now! What can be done next in the fight against racism—from Jena to Chicago." Panelists include Shakria Hall, a Chicago State University student; Ashunda Harris, aunt of Aaron Harrison, who was shot in the back by the Chicago cops; Fred Riley, an electrician; and Anderson.

The local CBS affiliate carried as its top story on the September 23 10:00 p.m. news a report by Katie McCall from outside the Militant Labor Forum hall. She interviewed forum participants who were there that night.

"Whoever did this did it out of weakness," Leroy Watson, a meat packer who attended the march in Jena told the reporter. "They left their calling card to intimidate us, but we are going to push ahead with our support for the Jena Six, and get involved in any other fights that break out."

The newscast can be viewed at http://cbs2chicago.com/video/?id=35828@wbbm.dayport.com.



Militant

Protest at New York's Medgar Evers College.

Jena 6 Solidarity actions across U.S.*

ALABAMA
Montgomery, Alabama State Univ.
Tuscaloosa, Stillman College
Birmingham, Miles College

ARKANSAS
Little Rock, University of Central Arkansas

CALIFORNIA
San Jose, San Jose State Univ.
San Francisco, downtown
Berkeley, Univ. of California
Los Angeles, Locke High School
Los Angeles, Hollywood
Los Angeles, Leimert Park

COLORADO
Denver

CONNECTICUT
Bridgeport
New Canaan
Stamford
Storrs, Univ. of Connecticut

DELAWARE
Dover, Delaware State Univ.
Wilmington

FLORIDA
Cocoa
Tampa
Daytona Beach

GEORGIA
Atlanta, Morehouse College
Atlanta, Paine College

ILLINOIS
Chicago, Daley Plaza
Chicago, Lawndale
Chicago, Chicago State Univ.
Chicago, EXCEL Academy

INDIANA
Indianapolis, Indiana Univ.
Muncie, Ball State Univ.
Bloomington, Univ. of Indiana

IOWA
Des Moines
Calmar, Northeast Iowa Community College

KANSAS
Wichita, Wichita State Univ.

KENTUCKY
Lexington, Univ. of Kentucky

LOUISIANA
Natchitoches, Northwestern State Univ.
Jena

MAINE
Portland

MARYLAND
Baltimore, New Shiloh Baptist Church
Baltimore, Morgan State Univ.
Baltimore, Coppin State Univ.
Clinton

MASSACHUSETTS
Cambridge

MICHIGAN
Kalamazoo, Western Michigan University
Detroit

MISSOURI
Kansas City, Shawnee Mission East High School
Kansas City

NEBRASKA
Lincoln, Univ. of Nebraska

NEVADA
Reno, Univ. of Nevada Reno

NEW JERSEY
Newark
Trenton
Hackensack
Moorestown, Moorestown Friends School
Pomona, Richard Stockton College

NEW YORK
Albany, State Univ.
Brooklyn, Borough Hall
Brooklyn, Medgar Evers College
Long Island, Hofstra Univ.
Long Island, Stony Brook Univ.

NORTH CAROLINA
Charlotte, downtown
Charlotte, John C. Smith Univ.
Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina
Greensboro, North Carolina A&T
Greenville, East Carolina Univ.
Raleigh, Shaw University
Fayetteville, Fayetteville State Univ.

OHIO
Cleveland
Toledo, Univ. of Toledo
Wilberforce, Central State Univ.

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Nashville, Vanderbilt College

TEXAS
Austin, Univ. of Texas
Dallas, Southern Methodist Univ.
Arlington, Univ. of Texas

VIRGINIA
Williamsburg, College of William and Mary
Hampton, Hampton University
Hampton, First Baptist Church

WASHINGTON
Seattle

DIST. OF COLUMBIA
Washington

*This list is based on accounts from *Militant* reporters on the scene and local press reports. Actions most likely took place elsewhere, but we were unable to find information on them. —The Editors



Militant/Sara Lobman

Students walked out of Arts High School in Newark, New Jersey, to join protest September 20.

Jena 6 protests held across U.S.

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Thousands who couldn't make it on buses to join the protest in Jena, Louisiana, joined solidarity actions demanding justice for the Jena Six in cities and at campuses and churches across the country.

From Eugene, Oregon, to Calmar, Iowa, to Cocoa, Florida, more than 80 protest marches, candlelight vigils, rallies, and public meetings were organized across the United States on September 20 and in the days leading up to it. Hundreds of thousands more heeded the organizers' call to wear black in solidarity.

A couple thousand turned out for an action in front of the Capitol in Washington, D.C. Rallies of more than 2,000 also took place in Cleveland and Baltimore.

"We're out here to save some young people from injustice," Dwayne Easy told the *Militant* at a rally of 500 in Newark, New Jersey. He was marching with a contingent of 30 members of the International Longshoremen's Association Local 1233.

High school students played a prominent role in a number of protests. Student walkouts were organized at a number of high schools including Arts High School in Newark and Locke High School in Los Angeles. At the Excel Academy in Chicago, students and teachers organized a huge "Free Jena 6" human formation on the school lawn, which was captured on film by news helicopters.

"I feel if they feel they have the power to take control, we can stop things like this," Eugene Hazzard, a journalism teacher at Excel, told a local TV station.

Administrators at one Alabama high school made students take off T-shirts that supported the Jena Six. Another in Tennessee reportedly suspended students who wore black. At Hales Franciscan High School on Chicago's South Side, students successfully petitioned to wear black instead of the school uniform.

Bus and van transportation to Jena and local protests actions were organized at many of the more than 100 historically Black colleges and universities in the United States. In New York protests were held at several city and state colleges, including in Albany, at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, and on Long Island at Hofstra and Stony Brook universities.

Sara Lobman in Newark and Nancy Boyasko in New York contributed to this article.



Militant/Laura Anderson

Buses backed up along Louisiana highway as protesters made their way to Jena for rally

Tens of thousands rally in Jena

Continued from page 2

had signs in Spanish and English, she hugged them. "Whether you are Black, white, Asian or Hispanic, this is about what is right, what is good and what is fair," she said.

Amos Edmonds, a truck driver from Tennessee, met a busload of demonstrators from New York at a truck stop and insisted on buying dinner for many of them after he heard where they had been. "There are many other Jena, Louisianas around the country," he said.

Laura Anderson, Willie Cotton, and John Staggs contributed to this article.

International conference

Continued from front page

welcomed delegates at the opening session. Former ISSCO president Wang Gungwu, of the National University of Singapore, and Ling-chi Wang, professor emeritus at the University of California in Berkeley, gave the opening addresses.

Chinese immigrants in the world

The place of China in the world today and the role of Chinese immigrants in countries around the globe was the focus of many panel discussions throughout the two-day conference. In one roundtable, for example, Manying Ip from the University of Auckland, New Zealand, outlined the history of Chinese in that country going back to the anti-Chinese exclusion laws, poll taxes, and "reentry permits" required of Chinese New Zealanders returning from abroad in earlier decades. She pointed to the rapidly growing Asian immigration in New Zealand today, most of it from China.

Speaking on the same panel, Grace Chew of the Chinese Heritage Centre in Singapore described the experiences of Chinese living on Vietnam's Phu Quoc Island, based on her interviews with residents there. She said she was struck by the number of pepper farmers and other ethnic Chinese in that rural area who had fought on the side of the anti-imperialist forces in what the Vietnamese know as "the American war." This fact, she said, is often omitted in accounts of Vietnam's history. Only the reactionary role of wealthy Chinese businessmen in Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) is highlighted.

Other panels covered a wide range of topics, such as "The Chinese migrations to Africa and the foreign policy of mainland China," "Reconciling with the past: Canada's Chinese head tax redress," "Overseas Chinese: literature and arts," "The Chinese in Paris: new migration facing a new discrimination?" and "The Chinese diaspora in Latin America and the Caribbean."

A small selection of books was on sale by the Chinese Heritage Centre and by Pathfinder Press. One of the books that drew particular interest was Pathfinder's *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*, by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong. Its account of the history of Chinese immigration to Cuba and what Cuba's socialist revolution has accomplished in eradicating discrimination against Cubans of Chinese ancestry was new to many participants. They bought 20 copies of the book in English and Spanish.

U.S.-China relations

In his keynote address to the conference, titled "The impact of U.S.-China relations on Chinese Americans," Ling-chi Wang underscored the importance of the fact that the sixth conference of ISSCO was being held in China.

Washington condemns the governments of China, Cuba, and others for "one-party rule," Wang noted. In the United States, however, "the two parties are committed to capitalism and derive their financial support from corporate America. In reality there is only one party—the capitalist party."

There are "no substantive differences" between Democrats and Republicans in domestic and foreign policy, Wang explained. Washington's policy toward the People's Republic of China has been based on "a bipartisan consensus dictated by corporate America," beginning with their debate over "Who lost China?" after the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949. "Of course, China was not theirs to lose," he remarked to much laughter.



Opening of conference in Beijing of International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas on September 21. At the podium is outgoing ISSCO president Teresita Ang See of the Philippines. It was the first time the organization held its conference in China.

In subsequent decades, Wang emphasized, U.S. administrations from both capitalist parties relied on the threat of the "yellow peril" and the "red scare" to justify aggressive policies against China and harassment of Chinese American opponents of Washington's policies. He noted that even after the U.S. government shifted from "containment" to "engagement" of the People's Republic of China, with then-president Richard Nixon's visit to Beijing in 1972, "Chinese in the United States have often been targeted as spies for China."

Today, he said, the U.S. government seeks to win Beijing's support for the U.S.-led "global war on terror."

Chinese immigrant workers were "indispensable in the economic development of the western part of the United States, serving as a source of cheap labor," Wang said, and "Democrats and Republicans have been consistent in their immigration policies," which aim to keep it that way.

He noted that today at least 3 million people of Chinese ancestry live in the United States, and immigration continues to accelerate. "Now we are seeing an increasing diversity of the Chinese American population" through large numbers of Chinese immigrants coming not only from China but from other countries in Asia and Latin America, he said. Chinese immigrants in the United States speak many different languages and dialects, not just Cantonese as before.

"They are bifurcated between rich and poor," between well-paid professionals and superexploited Fujienese immigrants who labor in construction and clothing factories.

The rising economic development of China, along with broader social struggles in the United States, have increased the self-confidence of Chinese immigrants, he noted, "but racism, racial profiling, and violence against Chinese continue to erupt."

Chinese Americans, Wang concluded, "must get involved in affecting U.S.-China relations and in opposing racism."

The next full international conference of ISSCO will be held in 2010 in Singapore. Before then, at least one regional conference is planned, most likely for New Zealand.

The event concluded with the election of officers. Leo Suryadinata of the Chinese Heritage Centre in Singapore, which will host the 2010 gathering, was elected president. Peter Li of the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Canada, continues as vice president, and Teresita Ang See was chosen as secretary-treasurer.

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EDITORIAL

U.S. hands off Iran! No sanctions!

In response to the frenzy whipped up during Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's trip to New York, all opponents of Washington's "war on terror" should demand, "Hands off Iran!"

The U.S. rulers used the visit to demonize Iran. Ahmadinejad was denied the freedom to travel within the city given to other heads of state. Police commissioner Raymond Kelley rejected his request to visit the World Trade Center site, charging that the president wanted to "scout the next attack." A chorus of liberal, conservative, and reactionary voices denounced the invitation extended to Ahmadinejad to speak at Columbia University. The media hammered away at the theme that he was a new "Hitler" and a "madman."

In the face of this pressure, few responded to the need for counterprotests defending Iran's right to self-determination. This default only emboldens the imperialists in their drive to soften up working people for more sanctions against Iran and further military threats, as well as to legitimize wider restrictions on freedom of speech, assembly, and travel in this country.

Washington has deftly played up reactionary policies of the Ahmadinejad regime to confuse working people. Opponents of the U.S. war drive need to expose the rulers' false claim to be for democracy in Iran. Sanctions and military intervention by Washington are the last thing the Iranian toilers need. In 1953, the CIA and British intelligence engineered a coup against the elected government there and placed back in power the hated Pahlevi dynasty. The royal family then proceeded to smash the trade unions and ban opposition political parties and newspapers. Many were arrested, jailed, and executed. In 1979, a popular insurrection of millions overthrew the Pahlevi dynasty. Washington has been trying to recoup what it lost ever since.

We must speak out against Washington's efforts to place Iran in a pariah status and to deny its government the same rights accorded other governments. We must oppose the campaign by Washington, Paris, Berlin, and London to deny Iran the right to develop nuclear power. We need to say loud and clear, "Hands off Iran!" "No to sanctions!" "No to military threats!"

U.S. gov't prepares more sanctions on Iran

BY CINDY JAQUITH

September 25—Stepping up military pressure against Iran, Washington prepared to impose more sanctions against Tehran this week for not abandoning nuclear power development.

Major General Rick Lynch announced that U.S. military forces in Iraq were building a base just four miles from the Iranian border. He also said they were constructing six fortified checkpoints on roads leading to Baghdad from Iran. Washington charges Tehran with providing weapons to militias in Iraq hostile to U.S. occupation forces there.

On September 20, U.S. forces in Iraq arrested an Iranian in the Kurdish city of Sulaimaniya, accusing him of smuggling explosives into the country. They said he was a member of the Quds Force of Iran's Revolutionary Guards. The Kurdish regional government protested the arrest saying the man was an invited trade official and demanded his release.

Meanwhile, further information came to light about a September 6 Israeli air strike in Syria near the Turkish border. Initially Tel Aviv made no comment on the raid, and Damascus said little. But on September 19, former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised current prime minister Ehud Ohlmert for the attack.

The September 21 *Washington Post* reported that U.S. government sources said the Israeli raid targeted "a suspected nuclear site set up in apparent collaboration with North Korea." Information about the facility, the *Post* said, was passed to Israel from Washington.

On September 21, U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice and French foreign minister Bernard Kouchner held a joint news conference to announce plans to tighten sanctions against Iran. "We have explored and have used various freezes on assets of individuals. We have used visa bans," said Rice. "I think there are any number of ways that we can expand those efforts."

Kouchner said France is seeking a diplomatic solution to its conflict with Iran. But days earlier, on September 16, he said the world should "prepare for the worst" with Iran and that "the worst is war."

German chancellor Angela Merkel's party, meanwhile, indicated that it agreed with further sanctions against Tehran. "It seems now legitimate to raise the stakes," said Ruprecht Polenz, of the Christian Democratic Union.

Chicago vigil protests racist killing of Asian man

BY DENNIS RICHTER

CHICAGO—Eighty people attended a September 8 vigil here for Du Doan, a 62-year-old Vietnamese American fisherman who drowned in Lake Michigan after a racist pushed him into the water September 1.

John Haley, a self-described skinhead, was arrested and charged with first-degree murder and aggravated battery. According to Myron Dean Quon, legal director of the Asian American Institute, "three different men who appeared to be Asian were attacked. The first was shoved into the water on July 31, and John Haley has been charged with aggravated battery for this crime." Quon said that "just hours before he murdered Du Doan, John Haley attempted to push another Asian man into Lake Michigan."

The vigil, held not far from the site of Doan's murder, was initiated by the Asian American Institute in Chicago and cosponsored by 30 community organizations.

"Clearly Du Doan's race was a factor," said Quon at the vigil, "and not calling this a hate crime could make people think there is no such thing as discrimination against Asians in Chicago and that just isn't true."

LETTERS

Racist vandalism

Saw a story about the vandalism at your Chicago office. Glad to see y'all writing on and being active in the Jena Six movement. I'm a Solidarity member from New Orleans and we had some comrades at the rally as well. Unfortunately, I'm out of the country and having to watch the movement unfold digitally. Guess this e-mail is really just to send some comradely greetings up y'all's way and say keep up the necessary work.

Enku Ide
by e-mail

Militant does great job

I subscribe to the *Militant* and would like to order five extra copies of the September 17, 2007, issue. Please convey to the *Militant* staff what a great job they do.

The *Militant* is the best news publication in print in the United States that I'm aware of that informs and strengthens working people in their struggle. Please be aware of the great service that you perform.

Michael Smith

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Blackwater in Iraq



Blackwater USA forces in Iraq. Washington uses 10,800 mercenaries as part of its occupation force in Iraq.

Continued from front page

Times.

Many of the mercenaries are elite soldiers recently retired from special operations units. Special operations units employ tactics such as "baiting" Iraqis by scattering detonation cords, plastic explosives, and ammunition, and then killing those who pick them up.

"Basically, we would put an item out there and watch it," said Cpt. Matthew Didier, the leader of an elite sniper platoon. If someone picked the item up and attempted to leave with it, "we would engage the individual," he said.

Liberals have seized on the Blackwater controversy as a factional wedge against the Bush administration's tactics in conducting the war. But actions and statements by leading Democrats this week reflect the shallowness of their antiwar posturing.

Asked by ABC's George Stephanopoulos September 23 whether she would withdraw all U.S. troops from Iraq during a first term as president, Hillary Clinton, the leading contender for the Democratic nomination, answered that she did not know. "How much more aggressive will Iran have become?" she asked. The senator told CNN that some U.S. forces would remain in Iraq to train the Iraqi military and fight al-Qaeda.

A bill by Senator Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat, failed by a vote of 47 to 47 September 21. It called for beginning the phased redeployment of troops from Iraq to be completed by March 2008. Echoing Clinton's stance an untold number of troops would remain indefinitely.

Levin said he will try to get support for bringing the bill to the floor again by making the March 2008 date a goal instead of a requirement, reported the *Detroit Free Press.*

Spending requests for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have steadily increased from $94 billion in 2004, to $108 billion in 2005, and $122 billion in 2006. The administration's request for $120 billion in "emergency" funding for the wars was approved with bipartisan support in May after Democrats dropped attempts to include provisions for a phased withdrawal from Iraq.

Meanwhile, militias backed by competing capitalist Shiite and Sunni forces continue to carry out bombings and kidnappings as they fight for control of oil and other natural resources.

Twenty-eight people were killed and 34 wounded when a suicide bomber detonated explosives inside a crowded mosque in Baquba September 25. The bombing targeted a meeting between the Shiite Mahdi Army militia and a Sunni militia known as the 1920 Revolution Brigades. In recent months, the latter has been joining with U.S. forces to secure Sunni regions in Iraq.